PREFACE

What is civilization? It is a complex of security and culture of order and liberty .... It is an intricate and precarious thing, dependent upon a score of factors, of which any one may determine greatness or decay. – The Pleasures of Philosophy, Will Durant

This is a study about the pursuit of national security by the apparatus of foreign policy of Indian Republic Fundamentally, the concept of national security is elusive, subject not only to the frailties of human design, but also ever changing fortune-known as ‘conjunctions’ in social sciences. It seeks to understand the Indian foreign policy with reference to a number of perspectives-nationalism, a desire to play a significant role in world affairs, and humanitarian considerations, but national security has ostensibly remained the overriding paradigm. Of late, observers of the Indian foreign policy have devoted considerable attention to the country’s surmounting complexities and problems of national security, and a dominant view that has emerged holds that the issue of national security has perhaps not been applied to foreign policy in a rigorously thought out and meticulous way. This has to be juxtaposed in a larger context which might provide multiple reasons, including idealism, the pressure of day-to-day events and reflexes based on inadequately examined assumptions. Foreign policy also bears the stamp of subjective factors and sectional interest connected with regions, ethnicities, religion and party politics. The result has been a mixed bag of successes and failures for national security perspective in India’s foreign policy.

India is an ancient civilization, but a very young modern nation-state. India is a difficult country to characterize and Indians not easy to define, especially today when they are emerging from the shadows of
history into the glare of a globalized world. India now stands at a critical juncture. Global trends point to the possibility of the India economy approximating that of powers such as Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom and Russia by 2020, and overtaking them in subsequent decades to become the third largest economy behind the United States and China. India has the wherewithal to become a global military and technological power even earlier. The right choices can contribute significantly to this process and, conversely, mistakes can prove costly.

This study is an attempt to try and understand how in reality the question of national security has been perceived and answered in the framework of evolving Indian foreign policy, in the context of the past, and also suggests the framework of policy choices and strategies pertaining in national security for the future on the basis of an analysis of India’s national interest, and national power.

The task is fraught with dangers. India’s national security and foreign policy as a area of research is too big and too diverse to allow for convenient cover-all levels. To every generalization there is a notable exception. For every similarity there is a significant difference. Thus, several organizing principles have been adopted so as to make the task manageable.

The study draws upon official (Govt. of India) documents related to the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Defence along with reference books and papers/articles written by experts with theoretical and practical knowledge of their subjects. While studying the problems and events in the field of national security indulging in their details or going into their historical narration has been avoided. Rather, the study devotes itself to deriving contents and trends related to the formulation of national security. The multi-disciplinary approach adopted in the study endeavours
to identify India’s national security issues in its external interface and cogently weaves these into its foreign policy.

India appears to be on the threshold of ‘take-off’ today, but the reasons for this have to go beyond the euphoria of the current ‘feel food’ wave. In analyzing the national security of – We, the people – who have been in the crucible of history for millennia, no picture can be starkly black or white. Not everything can be right nor everything wrong. The challenge is to draw a balance sheet calculated on the foundational strength of ‘a people’, and to essay the argument that inspite of the obvious weaknesses, the strength will prevail. Culture, history and the social structure play a vital role in this calculation. So does the innate resilience of ‘a people’ and their aspirations and ambitions.

The study adopts a three-dimensional definition of national interest, comprising security, economic prosperity and global public goods. While incorporating the dynamics of the overarching interactions between these three national interest objectives, national security issue has been analysed in detail, focusing on the broad trends as they were in the past and also what they should be. Since the thrust of the study is forward-looking content analysis and not a historical one, some details have been voluntarily avoided for the thematic treatment of the subject.

Herein an important concern is how the national security concerns have changed over time and how these have been analysed by the various scholars. Both primary and secondary published data have been consulted, both for background material and specific interpretations. The reasons for choosing national security and analyzing its nitty-gritty over and above economic prosperity and global public goods under the gambit of the national interest will emerge in the course of the study. Detailed study of all three would have been desirable, but national security issue
being quite complex in itself seems to be an optimal choice that would be manageable, as well as sufficient to capture important aspects of the Indian foreign policy within the defined time duration and scope of the study with limited monetary resources. Hence this study has selected “national security” as the appropriate unit of research for gauging micro-political tendencies in the realm of country’s external affairs.

Data collected on four areas-neighbour, neighbourhood, and interests, the extended neighbourhood and energy security; nuclear doctrine, deterrence and conflict complexes; and multilateralism and diplomatic skills, along with that on four crucial sets of issues-content analysis of the MEA and the MoD annual reports; geopolitics of South Asia; terrorism and maritime security – constitute the core research materials on which this study is based. Multi-level analysis has been pressed into with the aim of charting and explaining the national security, and its governance through the foreign policy in India. This analysis can help in answering the three interrelated questions: How have national security, both at the level of concept and application has changed over time? Why do patterns of political instability and turmoil vary across regions? What are the implications of the changed global political context for the government’s capacity to manage India’s national security?

The study is organized into eight chapters including conclusion. The first chapter is introduction devoted to a primordial discussion of the problem and the analytical framework, defining the nature, aims and scope of the study, and also the functional hypothesis in form of the argument. Relationally, conceptual and theoretical issues comprising explicit definitions of key concepts-the basic units of the study-have also been dealt herein.
Next six chapters that follow constitute the core of the study. The second one presents competing national imaginations of the national security, analyzing the political picture and its cleavages, along with international variables and linkages. Chapter three delineates the political architecture of foreign policy making in India, in the context of the interplay between official actors, specific government agencies and non-state actors. It also analyses content and substance of official government documents, Revolution in Military Affairs and India’s Military Strategy which provided shape and direction to national security’s aims and objectives. Chapter four focuses on the issue of political stability and response to terrorism and cross-border tensions in the South Asia, analyzing along with internal security and India’s maritime security. All this with the aim of examining the environmental, structural and operational dimensions of the international politics of the region. Chapter five looks into the extended neighbourhood and the question of energy security with reference to China, U.S., Russia, West Asia EU, etc. Chapter Six takes up the all important matter of Indian nuclear doctrine, examining the interplay of the doctrine of risk balance and strategy logistics, along with conflict complexes enmeshed in the riddle and puzzle of nuclear deterrence. Chapter seven deals with multilateral engagements and Indian diplomacy’s skills and pragmatism. Evaluating our postures, trade-offs and pay-offs in and through deadlocks and negotiations at various international fora like the UN, SAARC, NAM, G-20, BRICS and IOR to measure the emerging positives and challenges for India as a ‘regional’ as well as ‘continental’ power.

Final inferences are provided in the concluding eighth chapter. What has changed and the how and why of those changes are discussed in summarized from. Also discussed herein is the analytical and prescriptive
significance of the Indian material for bringing out new perspectives and benchmarks for the national security of India in future. If the study contributes to fresh thinking on the national security in India’s external policy community and an enlarged national consensus on prefixed long-term strategies, its purpose will be served.

Now, I take opportunity hereby to acknowledge the unflinching support of a number of individuals, and institutions which has been crucial in the making of this study. I wish to express my appreciation to all those whom I worked / interacted and whose thoughts and insights helped in furthering my knowledge and understanding of the subject. Four years back after I got myself registered for the research work on the seminal topic of national security, the inherent intellectual challenge became quite obvious to me. Answering again, the inherent questions of investigation were not any cakewalk. Considerable reorientation and retooling of my methodological approach and writing narrative skill was required at the outset. Hence, first and foremost, it is with deepest gratitude that I acknowledge stimulating guidance, valuable comments, suggestions and continuous encouragement given by my supervisor, Dr. Y.C. Singh, which helped me to crystallize and refine the presentation of my thesis.

I’m beholden to my teachers of the Department of Political Science, Indraprastha College, New Delhi for creating my intellectual base. I owe a special debt to Dr. Munni Palariya, HoD and Convenor, alongwith Dr. Madhurendra Kumar, Dr. Neeta Bora, Dr. B.L. Sah, Dr. Karki, Dr. R. Pant and others of Deptt. of Pol. Sci., DSB Campus Kumaun University, Nainital for their responses and comments on various chapters. Their kindness, and support were indispensable for the discussion of some specific problems.
I am very thankful to staff at Institute of Defence and Strategic Analysis, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, the Parliament House Library, the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Contemporary Studies Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, the Kumaun University Central Library, Naintial and the M.B. Govt. P.G. College Library, Haldwani for helping my search for documents and other related materials. I’m also thankful to Brahma Challaney, Professor of Strategic Studies at the Centre of Policy Research New Delhi for facilitating brainstorming sessions and overall assessment.

Over the years, I have gained much from exchanges and discussions on Indian politics with a number of friends and colleagues in Delhi and other places. This includes many people not involved in the writing of this work. For their camaraderie and support, I thank them for many stimulating discussions on politics and policy in India. My thanks to Dr. (Mrs.) Neelam Singh, wife of my supervisor are of a different order. She has been a constant source of motivation, ideas, and full of warm welcome during my numerous visits to their house for guidance and counselling. I want to thank my typist, Mrs. Manju Manral who has been very cooperative and kind.

Now, as always, personal thanks. To start with, I convey my wholehearted respect and gratitude to my In-Laws Dr. B.S. Bisht and Mrs. Rajnikanta Bisht for their continuous ‘rock strong’ motivation, encouragement and ‘parental’ affection during the course of my research. I shall always be indebted to both of them for bestowing their faith in me in testing times of crisis and challenges one goes through in such arduous undertaking with immense patience. They were there with me when this task was not more than a gleam in the eye four years back.
I’m also grateful to my wonderful parents, Mr. Pushkar Singh Bora and Mrs. Daya Bora, who are always by my side and whose love and support knows no limits. Here, my thanks goes to my amazing and very special elder sisters: Sujata and Vinita for their warm ‘sisterly’ caring and sharing since my childhood, continuing in and through my growing years, enlightening and grooming me with their ‘bold and beautiful’ attitude towards life and living.

Writing a Ph.D. dissertation puts pressure on most accommodating and patient of families, especially those of ‘newly married ones’ like mine. In my case, I’m proud to say that I’ve been quite lucky. My ‘life-companion’, Shaurya, a ‘gem of a person’, has been with me constantly through every second, minute, hour, day and week of my endeavour with his unbounded magical love wrapped in his sweet nature, he has been almost superhumanly sensitive and forbearing with me as I locked myself away from him and my family life for more than six months and immersed myself in the intricate matrix of the national security paradigm of Indian foreign policy in the final completion stage of my work.

Finally, with the deepest gratitude, I wish to thank every person who has inspired, touched and illuminated me and my life with his or her presence. And, last but not the least, I give thanks to the God Almighty for providing me the humane opportunity to make a humble but nevertheless, a creative difference into the affairs of my country and the contemporary times with the academic pursuit of research study presented in the thesis form in the following pages.

Haldwani
Date: 15-08-2012

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